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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 9th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 19 October 1998, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Macedo ..... (Mexico)

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98-81705 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Election of officers (*continued*)

1. **Ms. Korpi** (Finland) nominated Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoué (Côte d'Ivoire) for the office of Rapporteur.

2. *Mr. Tanoh-Boutchoué (Côte d'Ivoire) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.*

Agenda item 81: Effects of atomic radiation (*continued*) (A/53/46, A/53/478, A/53/483; A/C.4/53/L.6)

3. **Mr. Skrypko** (Belarus) said that his delegation noted with satisfaction from the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (A/53/46) that research on the after-effects of the Chernobyl disaster remained the focus of attention. Contrary to what was stated in paragraph 6 of the report, however, national research conducted by Belarus demonstrated that over 2 million people, including over 500,000 children under the age of 17, living on a quarter of the Republic's territory, had been exposed to radiation; those findings, supported by the results of the international scientific conferences on Chernobyl, showed that not "some individuals", but practically every fifth inhabitant of Belarus had received a high dose of radiation over a protracted period. Over 20 per cent of the land could not be lived on or farmed. The vast scale of the disaster was also demonstrated by a marked increase in infant mortality, a sharp decline in the birth rate, and an increase in the incidence of thyroid cancer and breast cancer; doctors and scientists believed that an epidemic of cancer-related diseases was imminent in Belarus.

4. His delegation welcomed the intention of the Scientific Committee, indicated in paragraph 14 of its report, to produce a review of all the information available on the Chernobyl disaster. It hoped that national research conducted by the countries most affected by the disaster would be used in the preparation of the report, and expressed its readiness to provide the Scientific Committee with comprehensive information.

5. Belarus attached paramount importance to ensuring maximum radiation safety for its citizens. The Chernobyl tragedy had had a negative effect on economic and social life which impeded the creation of favourable conditions for sustainable development in the country as a whole. The Parliament had approved a new state programme to minimize and gradually overcome the after-effects of the Chernobyl accident, covering health care, compensation for material losses and psychological damage, and the construction of new housing.

6. The losses suffered by Belarus as a consequence of the Chernobyl disaster were estimated at $235 billion. Belarus was unable to solve the post-Chernobyl problems alone, and continued to rely on international assistance. It was therefore concerned about donor fatigue, and felt that it was unjustified that the attention of the international community was currently focused more on problems of nuclear safety and closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant than on the medical, humanitarian, environmental and socio-psychological consequences of the accident. Belarus appealed to States and international organizations for continued assistance to the population of the most affected countries; it was especially interested in receiving the newest technologies for cleaning contaminated soil so that it could be used for agricultural purposes.

7. Belarus was taking steps to streamline its national legislation and help save future generations from similar disasters. In January 1998 two laws had entered into force, on radiation protection of the population and on export control, which established the basis for legislative regulation in ensuring radiation safety and adherence to international standards of nuclear material management and control. A draft law on the use of atomic energy and radiation protection, which would determine the degree of liability for the consequences of the use of ionizing radiation sources, was currently under consideration by the Parliament. In November 1997, the Parliament had ratified the Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage, and in September 1998 Belarus had signed the protocol of amendments to that Convention and acceded to the International Convention on Nuclear Safety.

8. He drew attention to the proposal by Belarus to convene an international scientific conference under the aegis of the Scientific Committee to work out a programme of international research on the medical and environmental after-effects of the Chernobyl disaster.

9. His delegation expressed support for maintaining the independent status and functions of the Scientific Committee, as well as its direct reporting arrangements with the General Assembly. It also shared the Scientific Committee's view (A/53/46, para. 13) that there was no need for pre-publication evaluation by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) or the World Health Organization (WHO), since that could adversely influence the independent status, objectivity and impartiality of the analysis by the Scientific Committee.

10. **Ms. Arystanbekova** (Kazakhstan) said that Kazakhstan was deeply concerned about the effects of atomic radiation because for almost half a century it had had

nuclear weapons deployed on its territory and had been the scene of a large number of nuclear tests, from 29 August 1949 to 29 August 1991, when the President of Kazakhstan had closed the testing ground. The explosions of about 500 nuclear devices had undermined the economy of the Semipalatinsk region, creating a substantial need for humanitarian and social assistance. Since the necessary measures to protect the population had not been taken, 1.6 million people had been subjected to radiation in Kazakhstan. The underground tests had destroyed ecological linkages, accelerating the process of desertification. Large areas of land and water had been contaminated by radiation, and economic activity in the area around the testing ground had been considerably reduced.

11. Kazakhstan was continuing to make enormous efforts to overcome the acute socio-economic, humanitarian and environmental consequences of the nuclear weapons tests. A national nuclear research centre had been established at the former testing ground; other action included the adoption of a law on the rehabilitation of the victims of nuclear tests, the establishment of a medical rehabilitation programme, the launching of a charitable fund, and plans for the construction of an interregional medical rehabilitation centre in Semipalatinsk.

12. Kazakhstan's voluntary renunciation of nuclear weapons and its firm commitment to the non-proliferation regime afforded clear evidence that it was a consistent supporter of the strengthening of regional and global security and resolutely opposed any undermining of the non-proliferation regime. In 1997 and 1998, two international conferences had been held in Kazakhstan on issues relating to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; the issues considered had included radiation safety and rehabilitation of the territory of the former testing ground.

13. In implementation of General Assembly resolution 52/169 M, an inter-agency mission had been organized at Headquarters, with the participation of experts who had visited the Semipalatinsk region and conducted a comprehensive survey of the consequences of the nuclear tests. The results unambiguously confirmed that a persistently high background level of radiation remained in the region, and that there were serious negative consequences of the nuclear explosions. The experts had also concluded that Kazakhstan needed effective assistance from the international community. She requested Member States, and especially donor countries, to provide Kazakhstan with the necessary financial and technical assistance to rehabilitate the Semipalatinsk region.

14. Kazakhstan had always stated its readiness to provide every possible assistance to the work of the Scientific Committee. In December 1997, with the agreement of officers of the Scientific Committee, it had submitted comprehensive information on the consequences of the nuclear explosions at the Semipalatinsk testing ground for inclusion in the annual report. Unfortunately, there was no reference in that report to the impact of atomic radiation on the health of the inhabitants of Kazakhstan; she requested that that information should be included.

15. The severe consequences of the nuclear tests at Semipalatinsk demonstrated the need for united international efforts to overcome the consequences of large-scale disasters.

16. **Mr. Gehlot** (India) said that atomic energy was becoming increasingly important in improving standards of living and the quality of life, particularly in developing countries. The work of the Scientific Committee was very important for providing an independent perspective on the effects, levels and risks of atomic radiation. India shared the view that IAEA and the Scientific Committee both derived benefits from their respective roles, and therefore supported the inclusion of the seventh and eighth preambular paragraphs in draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.6. It also agreed that it was important to sustain the current functions and independent role of the Scientific Committee, including the current reporting arrangements, and therefore supported the inclusion of operative paragraphs 2 and 4.

17. India supported the Scientific Committee's new programme for reviewing sources of exposure to ionizing radiation, and hoped that more attention would be paid to newly emerging concepts such as radioadaptive response to low doses of ionizing radiation. In that connection, he said that the southern coastal regions of India, particularly the state of Kerala, had very high background levels of radiation, yet fairly dense populations had been living in such areas for over 13 centuries. Studies carried out by his Government did not reveal higher frequencies of micronuclei and chromosomal aberrations in newborn children, or a higher cancer risk among the inhabitants in general. Those observations pointed to the need for further studies on the effects on humans of low chronic exposures and high acute exposures.

18. The Atomic Energy Regulatory Board of India determined the safety standards to be followed, and had the authority to inspect and approve the operations of all nuclear installations. It interacted with international bodies and ensured compliance with the recommendations of the International Commission on Radiation Protection (ICRP).

It was currently increasing its involvement in safety research projects of relevance to regulatory decision-making, and was establishing a safety research institute. Considerable research and development work was devoted to health, safety and environmental problems, and a large number of training and retraining programmes were being organized.

19. **Mr. Hrbáč** (Slovakia) said that the primary focus of the Scientific Committee had been expanded from studying the hazards of environmental radionuclides resulting from the atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons to reviewing and assessing the health risks posed to the world's population by exposure to all sources of radiation. As a country actively pursuing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the application of radioisotopes in industry and medicine, Slovakia attached great importance to the Scientific Committee's work, and had been providing it with relevant data as well as making full use of its work.

20. Slovakia welcomed the Committee's latest report (A/53/46) as well as the reports prepared by IAEA (A/53/478) and WHO (A/53/483). Slovakia had consistently advocated the preservation of the Scientific Committee's independent scientific status, and therefore was pleased to learn that IAEA and WHO shared that view. It supported the recommendations contained in the Committee's report, as well as the Committee's intention to continue assessing the levels of exposure of the world's population to ionizing radiation and studying its effects.

21. **Mr. Haggag** (Egypt) expressed appreciation for the excellent work of the Scientific Committee, which was as relevant as ever and should continue. It was to be hoped that its lucid reports would be translated into practical measures for the elimination or reduction of radiation hazards.

22. Atomic energy, applied to peaceful purposes, notably in the fields of agriculture, medicine and industry, could confer great benefits upon humanity. Developing countries should have unrestricted and unconditional access to those benefits, in accordance with Article IV of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

23. Egypt continued to advocate the view that the Middle East should be a zone free of nuclear weapons, especially weapons of mass destruction. All existing nuclear facilities located there should be subjected to comprehensive safeguards under the supervision of the International Atomic Energy Agency. In particular, there was a nuclear reactor in Israel that was not subject to any form of international monitoring and constituted a threat to the people of Egypt and the other States in the region. The international community should assume its responsibilities in that connection.

24. Egypt supported the draft resolution on the Scientific Committee and was prepared to strengthen its cooperation with it.

25. **Mr. Islam** (Pakistan) said that the Scientific Committee was to be commended for its enormous contribution to highlighting the adverse effects of atomic radiation on human beings and on the environment, and for its coordination with member States in gathering and presenting valuable information in that area. Pakistan looked forward to the Committee's substantive year 2000 report, and urged it to continue to assess the cancer mortality and incidence data derived from various studies, as well as to review the cellular changes that determined heritable genetic defects. The fact that medical radiation had become the largest source of man-made radiation exposure was a matter of concern, and there was a need to adopt measures against such exposure without interrupting scientific research in nuclear medicine.

26. On previous occasions, Pakistan had emphasized that the Scientific Committee's independence and representative character must not be circumvented by merging it with other institutions or by changing its existing reporting arrangements. Pakistan therefore welcomed the reports of the IAEA and WHO, which contained similar recommendations. In its current form as an independent body, the Scientific Committee should be able to continue to make valuable contributions on the effects of atomic radiation on human beings, and its objectives should remain as originally outlined in General Assembly resolution 913 (X) of 3 December 1955.

27. **Mr. Valle** (Brazil), speaking on behalf of the States members of the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR), as well as Bolivia and Chile, said that those States particularly welcomed the decision by the Scientific Committee to produce a review, in its year 2000 report, of the effects of radiation resulting from the Chernobyl accident, and hoped that the results of that investigation would add to existing information on persons exposed to atomic radiation. The value of the Committee's work in evaluating the levels and risks of exposure to natural radiation sources should also be emphasized.

28. He was gratified by the Scientific Committee's interest in the views expressed during the fifty-second session of the General Assembly regarding its role and functions in the context of United Nations reform, and also took note of the detailed responses of IAEA and WHO favouring the continuation of the Committee's present reporting arrangements. In conclusion, he was pleased to announce that in addition to Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile,

Paraguay and Uruguay had decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution on the effects of atomic radiation.

29. **Mr. Al-Anbuge** (Iraq), referring to an article in the 10 April 1995 issue of *Le Monde diplomatique*, said that United States and British forces had used bombs and shells containing, in all, some 300 tons of depleted uranium in their aggression against Iraq in 1991, violating the Charter of the United Nations and various international treaties and covenants and producing environmental contamination, disease among the civilian population, and further damaging effects which were only beginning to appear. Not only cancer rates, but also the incidence of congenital abnormality, myo- and neuropathy, miscarriage and various other disorders had risen sharply, as a report by the Secretary-General to the Subcommission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities had amply documented. The use of depleted uranium weapons by the United States and British forces had been a deliberate exercise in the mass killing of civilians, as the toxic effects of such weapons inevitably extended far beyond the theatre of military operations. The United States and the United Kingdom must bear full responsibility under international law for the grave environmental and health-related effects produced in Iraq by their radioactive armament. The suffering of the current generation was only the beginning; the effects would be felt by future generations as well. Depleted uranium weapons should be banned, and States with stockpiles of them should be required to destroy them immediately.

30. **Mr. Mekdad** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that while the growing use of nuclear power had certainly confronted the world with some potentially serious problems, there could be no doubt that the peaceful use of atomic energy could be greatly beneficial to humanity. The Scientific Committee had done excellent work in investigating the effects of atomic energy and assessing its hazards. Effective cooperation among the various United Nations agencies concerned with the issue should be encouraged.

31. The most effective way to minimize the negative effects of atomic radiation would be to implement agreed-upon multilateral measures to that end, including the standards developed by IAEA. At the same time, the United Nations system should develop future-oriented plans for reducing the gap between the nations of the North and those of the South in the area of technology for the peaceful use of atomic power.

32. The Syrian Arab Republic had signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty, and was strongly in favour of a stronger and more effective system of safeguards. It wished to see the Middle East made a nuclear-weapon-free zone, but that would be impossible as long as Israel continued to possess a massive nuclear arsenal, outside the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the safeguards system, which it threatened to use to impose the status quo on its neighbours, heedless of the will of the international community. Israel's unilateral development of its military nuclear programme constituted a factor of destabilization and fear in the Middle East, especially given the current situation. Furthermore, Israel's nuclear installations were known to be leaking radiation and liable to cracking, owing to their advanced age, and consequently were a potential source of serious danger to neighbouring countries. The international community should compel Israel to place its nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards.

33. The tragedies of Hiroshima, Nagasaki and Chernobyl must never be allowed to happen again, and consequently the Syrian Arab Republic called for the elimination of all stockpiles of nuclear weapons. At the same time, it warned against the attempts by certain countries to attach stringent conditions to the transfer of nuclear technology to countries that wished to use it for peaceful purposes. On the contrary, developing countries should be helped and encouraged to use nuclear technology for peace.

34. Effective international cooperation based on good will was the only way to remove the threat of atomic radiation which faced all humanity, and harness the power of the atom to constructive ends.

35. **Mr. Ovia** (Papua New Guinea) said that Papua New Guinea continued to call for the cessation of nuclear testing in the South Pacific region, and joined the Marshall Islands in urging the Government of the United States of America to compensate the people affected by that Government's previous nuclear testing and to undertake greater efforts to clean up the environment in the region.

36. Papua New Guinea also welcomed the Scientific Committee's report, but reiterated that its mandate should be broadened to include active assistance to those suffering from the effects of atomic radiation. The need for the complete cessation of all nuclear testing and the safe and willing destruction of all nuclear weapons by those possessing them had already been cited by his delegation and others in various forums; in addition, he called on the French authorities to keep the region informed of any new findings and developments arising from the work of scientists in French Polynesia.

37. **Mr. Semenenko** (Ukraine) said that in view of the Scientific Committee's continuing status as the major international body reviewing the effects of exposure of the

world population to all sources of ionizing radiation, his delegation welcomed its decision to include a review of all information available about both local and regional exposures resulting from the Chernobyl accident as a major component of its year 2000 report. The after-effects of the Chernobyl tragedy, including the contamination of the regional environment with dangerous radioisotopes, continued to pose a threat, and Ukraine relied on the assistance of the international community in dealing with the problem. Recent measures taken in that regard gave reason to hope that such international assistance would increase, and would serve as a good example of the international community's ability to confront catastrophes of global dimensions.

38. **The Chairman** informed the Committee that, in addition to the original sponsors, Armenia, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Paraguay, Singapore, the Solomon Islands, and Uruguay had become co-sponsors of draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.6. The sponsors had expressed their wish that the draft resolution should be adopted by the Committee without a vote.

39. *Draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.6 was adopted.*

The meeting rose at 4.45 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/53/SR.10

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 10th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 22 October 1998, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Macedo ..... (Mexico)

Contents

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space

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98-81802 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (A/53/20, A/53/265)

1. **The Chairman** drew the attention of Committee members to the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) (A/53/20) and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (A/53/265), and said that 1998 was the fortieth anniversary of the establishment of COPUOS. Within a year of the launch of the first artificial satellite in 1957, the General Assembly had adopted the resolution creating that body, which recognized that "outer space should be used for peaceful purposes only" and expressed the desire "to promote energetically the fullest exploration and exploitation of outer space for the benefit of mankind".

2. The creation of the Committee had been crucial at the time of dangers of a serious confrontation between great Powers that could threaten humanity's existence. The international community had been concerned with the possibility of outer space being used as a battleground, and accordingly the United Nations had continued to take measures to ensure that outer space was a source of cooperation. Thanks to its efforts, a legal regime had been established consisting of five international treaties and five sets of principles governing space activities. That regime had contributed to enhancing opportunities for cooperation between countries and also between industries. The use of space technology was no longer limited to policy makers and experts, but belonged to all people, to meet their common needs.

3. People now had tools for better management of land and ocean resources, for agricultural development and for urban planning, thanks to remote sensing satellites. Satellite navigation systems increased the safety of land, sea and air travel; space communications shrank distances; satellite provided important information for early warning of natural disasters and mitigation of their consequences, and could also serve as powerful tools to enhance access to medical services and educational opportunities in remote and rural areas, particularly in developing countries. The United Nations, in partnership with civil society, should ensure that those benefits of space technology were shared by all people around the world. In that regard, it should be recalled that in 1997 the General Assembly had agreed that the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) should be convened in Vienna from 19–30 July 1999, under the theme "Space benefits for humanity in the twenty-first century". He was pleased to note that the Preparatory Committee for the Conference had made much progress in finalizing arrangements for it, including the preparation of the draft report. That Conference and the new concept of trusteeship being elaborated within the framework of the reform process provided an opportunity to plan effective international cooperation under the umbrella of the United Nations to ensure that the benefit of space technology was shared by all countries.

4. **Ms. Butschek** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, as well as of the associated countries Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, said that the European Union considered space technology to be a highly important and promising instrument capable of solving a number of global problems the international community was currently facing. It therefore reaffirmed its commitment to international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. The European Union welcomed the progress achieved in implementation of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications. The member States of the European Union, as well as of the European Space Agency, had made an effort to contribute significantly to that programme. In that context, they welcomed the efforts made by the Office for Outer Space Affairs to increase inter-agency coordination and to strengthen regional mechanisms.

5. With regard to the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, the problem of space debris merited particular attention. That problem was becoming more urgent as a result of space flights. Not only did it make space projects more expensive owing to the necessity of shielding against such debris, it also exposed manned space flight endeavours to growing risks. The European Union welcomed the decision by the Committee to consider the item on a priority basis with a view to finalizing and adopting the technical report.

6. With respect to the work of the Legal Subcommittee, she drew attention to two proposals put forward in connection with the review of the status of the five legal instruments governing outer space. The first proposal emanated from a working paper submitted by the European Space Agency and the States which had signed cooperation agreements with it. One of the issues raised in that working paper was the question whether or not the concept of "launching State" as defined in the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space was still adequate. To clarify that question, COPUOS had decided that at their sessions in the year 2000 its subcommittees

would review the relevant materials, and informal consultations between interested Member States would take place before the next session of COPUOS. The European Union would continue to support that initiative.

7. The second proposal aimed at improving the acceptance of already existing mechanisms for the settlement of disputes provided for in the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects. Progress in that respect could be achieved if more States, pursuant to paragraph 3 of General Assembly resolution 2777 (XXVI) of 29 November 1971, declared that they would recognize as binding, in relation to any other State accepting the same obligation, decisions of the Claims Commission established under article XIV of the Convention.

8. Lastly, the European Union noted with satisfaction the decision to continue the use of unedited verbatim records of meetings of COPUOS instead of summary records. It was also appropriate to recall the forthcoming special session of COPUOS — the UNISPACE III Conference — to be held in 1999. The working groups of the Advisory Committee and the Preparatory Committee had been successful in drawing up the draft report of the Conference, the Executive Summary and the Vienna Declaration on Space and Human Development, which would facilitate consensus among the participants in UNISPACE III. Moreover, the European Union would like to see the provisional rules of procedure adopted in the form in which they appeared in the annex to document A/53/20.

9. **Mr. Tekaya** (Tunisia) said that the exploration and use of outer space for the benefit of all mankind was a noble goal towards which the international community must continue to strive. The progress of science and technology enabled space technology to be adapted very effectively in various fields, particularly that of development, and his Government therefore attached great importance to it. In recent years, his Government had done a great deal of work on the creation of an infrastructure for the management of national space activities, including the establishment of a national space committee and a permanent secretariat. In addition, it had established a national remote-sensing centre, which played an important role in such fields as environmental protection, early warning of natural disasters and combating desertification. With regard to combating desertification, Tunisia was cooperating effectively with a number of Western European and North African countries. His Government considered regional and international coordination of primary importance for such activities, as it was impossible to solve ecological problems on a purely national level.

10. The transfer of space technology to developing countries continued to be highly important, as the lack of such technology prevented them from making full use of the benefits of space activities. In that context, international cooperation was critical, and his Government paid a tribute to the United Nations bodies, programmes and agencies and the national and regional organizations which were cooperating with the developing countries to build national capacity in the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. Scientific exchanges and the organization of seminars, workshops and conferences were of great assistance in achieving that goal. His Government was grateful to the United Nations Programme on Space Applications for its help in carrying out the project entitled "Cooperative information network linking scientists and professionals in Africa (COPINE)". That network, assisted by satellite links, was playing a very useful role in the dissemination to African countries of scientific and technical information on questions relating to the adaptation of space technology, particularly in the fields of health care, agriculture, management of the environment, education and science.

11. The international community was determined to continue its work with respect to the peaceful uses of outer space and expand the access of the developing countries to the benefits of space activities and the possibilities of their use for economic, social and cultural development. The UNISPACE III Conference to be held in 1999 should further that work. His delegation was pleased with the progress being made in the preparatory work for the Conference and reaffirmed its willingness to take an active part in it. It set great store by the work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) in encouraging international cooperation. Because of its desire to ensure the best possible conditions for the future work of COPUOS, his delegation again requested that Tunisia should be included in its membership.

12. **Mr. Itoh** (Japan) said that his delegation recognized the increasingly important role that COPUOS was playing in the promotion of international cooperation in the uses of outer space. Since its inception nearly four decades earlier, COPUOS had enabled the international community to benefit from the uses of outer space through the encouragement of research, the dissemination of information and the establishment of a legal framework to regulate the exploration of outer space.

13. During the current year, COPUOS had made further advances. First of all, his delegation welcomed the progress made in the preparations for the UNISPACE III Conference, to be held in Vienna in July 1999. It supported the decisions relating to the Conference, including those pertaining to its

organization, venue, date, participants, provisional agenda and financial aspects. The Conference should consider the promotion of international cooperation in Earth observation activities in order to respond to the needs of both developed and developing countries. The participation of the private sector in the work of the Conference was essential.

14. Turning to administrative matters, he noted that new work methods had been successfully introduced in COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies in recent years. As part of that reform, a new item, "Review of the status of the five international legal instruments governing outer space", had been taken up at the thirty-seventh session of the Legal Subcommittee. His delegation believed that the addition of that item had helped to revitalize the discussions. It hoped that the Subcommittee would continue its efforts to function more effectively as a forum for legal discussions concerning space. In general, his delegation was satisfied with the results of the COPUOS reform thus far and called on all delegations to advance that process.

15. **Ms. Arystanbekova** (Kazakhstan) said that, as Kazakhstan possessed a suitable space infrastructure on its Territory, particularly the Baikonur launch site, it was actively participating in international space activities and supported the efforts of the United Nations to further develop international cooperation in that field. It considered that the question of environmental and ecological protection should be one of the important areas of international cooperation, and that it was necessary to make broad use of the latest achievements of space science and technology for that purpose. It was already clear that most global problems were connected with the deterioration of the environment. Kazakhstan, which had the experience of the global ecological disaster of the Aral Sea, attached great importance to the use of the achievements of space science and technology for ecological monitoring and protection of the environment.

16. Kazakhstan was actively participating in a number of international space projects, including some dealing with the use of space science and technology to prohibit the environment and ecological systems. It had recently signed an agreement with Russia on cooperation in the use of space and aviation technology and remote sensing of the Earth. Kazakhstan's aerospace agency, together with ESCAP, FAO and the European Space Agency, had been studying the possibility of holding a regional seminar in Almaty in 1999 entitled "Remote sensing and geoinformational systems in the State management of natural resources". Kazakhstan also participated actively in the work of the Inter-State Council of the Commonwealth of Independent States on the study and utilization of outer space. In February 1998 an agreement on space cooperation had been signed by Kazakhstan, Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, the main purpose of which was to consolidate the efforts of the parties to make practical use of the Baikonur launch site for peaceful purposes. Under its agreement with the Russian Federation for the leasing of the Baikonur site, Kazakhstan had since 1991 been participating in the Russian Federation's manned space programme.

17. Kazakhstan was interested in a dynamic development of cooperation with the United States under the 1994 agreement between Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation and the United States on technological guarantees relating to the launch of the Inmarsat-3 artificial earth satellite. In May 1998, an agreement had been signed between Kazakhstan and China on cooperation in the study and utilization of outer space for peaceful purposes. Kazakhstan was a cooperating member of the European Space Agency for the compilation of the International Catalogue of Space Objects and Fragments, as well as a member of the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific.

18. The problems dealt with in the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space relating to remote sensing, direct broadcasting and the use of nuclear energy sources in outer space were important and, under current circumstances, extremely topical. In that respect, her delegation noted with satisfaction the reference in the draft report of the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) to plans for the expansion of international cooperation in remote sensing and the launching for such purposes of 20 new satellites. Her delegation greatly appreciated the Committee's contribution to the expansion of international space activity and the development of space law; it should maintain its leading role in the future.

19. Her Government recognized the international agreements and regulations in force relating to the use of outer space for peaceful purposes and, with a view to becoming more closely integrated into international space activity, had ratified the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. It had also acceded to, *inter alia*, the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space, the Convention on International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects and the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space.

20. The Advisory Committee and the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had done a great deal of

preparatory work for the holding of UNISPACE III. The draft report of the Conference submitted by the Committee gave a full account of the work conducted in implementation of the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, held in 1982, and clearly defined the problem areas facing the international community in the field of international cooperation in outer space.

21. **Mr. Obeid** (Syrian Arab Republic) expressed concern about programmes aimed at the use of outer space for purposes that were not conducive to peace, at a time when the issue of developing cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space was particularly topical. The participation of a Syrian astronaut in space research reflected his country's readiness to engage in international cooperation in that field. A remote-sensing institution had been established in his country and its work was directed towards the utilization of the information received for the purposes of development.

22. To ensure that outer space was used for peaceful purposes, it was essential to tighten up the regulations governing space activities. It was imperative that regulatory principles should be adopted to prevent the arms race from spilling over into outer space. In that connection, it was important for the major spacefaring States to cooperate closely with each other. It was no less important to continue the search for ways and means of solving the problems of space debris, especially debris consisting of fragments of nuclear power sources.

23. His delegation noted with satisfaction the substantive nature and content of the report of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its decision on preparations for UNISPACE III. Lastly, he stressed the need to establish an equitable basis for the use of the benefits derived from space exploration and, to that end, to establish an effective regulatory system governing the application of space technology, which would give the developing countries wider access to such technology and contribute to the building of a more stable world in the future.

24. **Mr. Mahtab** (India) noted the considerable progress that had been made in the preparatory work for UNISPACE III and expressed appreciation to the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space for its efforts in that regard. He specifically noted the objectivity and balance of interests reflected in the draft Vienna declaration and requested all delegations to support the draft declaration in its current form.

25. Regarding India's recent achievements in space technology development and its utilization for peaceful purposes, particularly for the benefit of those at the grass-roots level, he said that the data provided by his country's remote-sensing missions were being made available to users across the globe. Significant advances in the area of satellite communications had made it possible to expand their use so as to provide a valuable link to rural areas. Another major accomplishment of the Indian space programme had been the development of the capability to launch the 1.2 ton class of satellites into a polar sun synchronous orbit.

26. India was committed to the promotion of international cooperation in the field of space education. A large number of students from various countries in the region had attended the Centre for Space Science and Technology Education in Asia and the Pacific, which had been established in India in November 1995. It should be emphasized that space research should benefit the grass-roots level, by enabling all Member States, particularly those in the developing world, to make the best possible use of technological breakthroughs in the field of space for their welfare and national development.

27. **Mr. Othman** (Malaysia) noted with satisfaction that special attention had been given to space technology applications for environmentally sound and sustainable development based on Agenda 21. It was important to ensure that outer space continued to be used for peaceful purposes. That could be achieved through further development of international space law and a strengthening of international cooperation for the peaceful uses of outer space. His Government believed that emphasis should be placed on transparency in outer space activities as well as on the exchange of data and the equitable sharing of space benefits between developed and developing countries.

28. His delegation called on the world space community to assist through the provision of remote-sensing data during natural disasters of the type that had occurred in the South-East Asia region in connection with uncontrollable peat and forest fires. Furthermore, it urged Member States to pay more attention to the problem of collisions of space objects, including those with nuclear power sources, with space debris. His delegation believed that every possible effort had to be made to remove defunct satellites and fragments of various man-made space objects that posed a high risk of collision in outer space.

29. **Mr. Gao Feng** (China) said that the United Nations outer space programmes had enabled a useful contribution to be made to the promotion and coordination of space activities. The organs and agencies of the United Nations deserved considerable praise for facilitating implementation of those programmes.

30. China's space industry was now developing extremely rapidly. Research, design, trial manufacture and production

capacities and testing systems had been established. A launching centre for all types of satellites, together with the necessary monitoring and control networks had been built. Various types of satellites developed by China were being successfully used in economic, scientific, technological and cultural fields and for the purposes of national defence. To contribute to its sustainable development, the Chinese Government had incorporated space technology into its national overall development strategy.

31. His delegation attached great significance to the preparations for UNISPACE III and was ready to join other delegations in a concerted effort to ensure that the Conference was a success. It was gratifying to note that the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Office for Outer Space Affairs had already begun to implement their functions as the Advisory Committee and executive secretariat for UNISPACE III.

32. The UNISPACE III report would be the most important document for the Conference. His delegation considered that in drafting the report it was necessary to proceed according to the following principles: first, the report should have a clear thematic focus on the fundamental objective of the Conference, and the relevant political, social and legal issues should not be neglected during the consideration of space-related science and technology. Secondly, it was necessary to underline the importance of international cooperation in the search for effective means of strengthening it, and in that endeavour the main responsibility lay with States and their Governments. Although the participation of the space industry and private enterprises was important, excessive "commercialization" of international cooperation should be avoided. Third, full account should be taken of the demands and proposals of the developing countries. Fourth, attention should also be given to measures to implement the decisions of the Conference. The plan of action, programmes and proposals contained in the report should have a clear focus so as to facilitate their effective implementation.

33. His Government supported the strengthening and enhancement of international space cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual benefit, exchange of experience and common principles of development. To that end, China had concluded intergovernmental agreements with many countries. The China State Space Administration had also signed inter-agency agreements with its counterparts in a number of countries. His Government attached great importance to cooperation with both developed and developing space countries. The "Resource I" satellite, jointly developed by China and Brazil, was in the final stages of assembly and would be launched in the near future. Regional multilateral cooperation between China, Pakistan, Korea and Thailand in developing small multi-task satellites was progressing successfully. In April 1998 in Bangkok, China, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Korea and Thailand had signed a Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the multi-task satellite project and other related activities. His Government would endeavour to expand its space cooperation with other countries in the world in order that space technology applications might be used more effectively for the benefit of humankind.

34. **Mr. González** (Chile), Vice-Chairman of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), said that in recent years the Committee had demonstrated its ability to fulfil its mandate in line with the new directions being pursued by the United Nations. The Committee had contributed to the Organization-wide efforts to do more with less, and had taken the decision to replace the costly verbatim and summary records of its meetings with unedited verbatim transcripts. A set of new measures agreed upon by the Committee and endorsed by the General Assembly last year had included introduction of the principles of equitable geographical distribution and rotation in the composition of the bureaux of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies; a shortening of the duration of the sessions of those bodies; and a broadening of the activity of the Legal Subcommittee. The Committee continued to move forward, and was prepared to demonstrate its ability to meet the goals connected with the holding of UNISPACE III, while keeping costs down. The savings made in conference-servicing resources by the Committee and its subsidiary bodies by shortening the length of their regular sessions during the current biennium would be utilized to service UNISPACE III.

35. The work of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, whose report was contained in document A/53/20, covered the following three areas: ways and means of maintaining outer space for peaceful purposes; preparations for UNISPACE III; the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-fifth session; the report of the Legal Subcommittee on the work of its thirty-seventh session; and spin-off benefits of space technology. In 1997, in resolution 52/56, the General Assembly had agreed that UNISPACE III should be convened in Vienna from 19 to 30 July 1999 as a special session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, open to all States Members of the United Nations. The Preparatory and Advisory Committees of the Conference had made considerable progress in the preparations for UNISPACE III. On the basis of the work of the Advisory Committee, the Preparatory Committee had made a number of recommendations, including

recommendations relating to the draft report and provisional rules of procedure of UNISPACE III and the organization of the Technical Forum as a technical body of the Conference. The Preparatory Committee had also reached consensus on the text of the provisional rules of procedure, which were before the General Assembly for endorsement at the current session.

36. Preparations for UNISPACE III were well under way at the regional level. Two preparatory regional conferences had already been convened: in Malaysia, for the Asian and Pacific region, and in Chile, for the Latin American and Caribbean region. A regional preparatory conference for Africa and Western Asia would be held shortly, and a regional conference for Eastern Europe was scheduled for 25 to 29 January 1999. The reports on the work of those regional conferences would be made available in time for the 1999 session of the Advisory Committee.

37. UNISPACE III provided enormous opportunities to strengthen the partnership between Governments and space agencies, on the one hand, and the private sector and non-governmental organizations, on the other, in order to further enhance international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space into the next millennium. Through various activities of the Technical Forum, agents of civil society would be given a chance to express their views on issues of concern to them, while Governments would be able to consider the most effective ways and means to work together with those potential players to meet the goals of the United Nations.

38. Referring to the work of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, he said that the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space noted the progress made by the Subcommittee in accordance with the multi-year work plan, which had been adopted in 1995 to address specific topics relating to space debris during the period from 1996 to 1998, the final stage of the work plan. In 1998 the work of the Subcommittee had concentrated on the consideration of space debris mitigation measures. In 1999 the Subcommittee would concentrate on finalizing the full technical report on space debris.

39. Regarding the use of nuclear power sources in outer space, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space noted that the Subcommittee had endorsed the work plan for the period from 2000 to 2003 and had proposed a schedule of work for developing a framework for safety assurance processes and standards for the use of nuclear power sources in outer space.

40. In view of the reduced schedule of work of the Subcommittee at its 1999 session and the preparatory work that needed to be conducted for UNISPACE III, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space agreed with the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee that the Subcommittee should consider at its 1999 session the following priority items: preparations for UNISPACE III; space debris; and the United Nations Programme on Space Applications and coordination of activities within the United Nations system. Further consideration of the other items which were on the agenda of the Subcommittee at the 1998 session would be postponed until the year 2000.

41. At the 1998 session, the Legal Subcommittee had begun its consideration of a new agenda item entitled "Review of the status of the five international legal instruments governing outer space". That was a positive step towards revitalizing the role of the Legal Subcommittee in ensuring the effectiveness of the international legal framework established by the United Nations to govern space activities. The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space noted that a working group would need to be established for the 1999 session of the Subcommittee to carry out further consideration of the item in accordance with the work plan adopted in 1997. In accordance with a request by the General Assembly, the Legal Subcommittee had also continued its informal consultations on the inclusion of new items in the Subcommittee's agenda. Although in 1998 the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space had been unable to reach agreement on the inclusion of a new item on the improvement of the Registration Convention, it welcomed inter-sessional consultations among interested delegations to seek a consensus on the matter before the 1999 session of the Subcommittee.

42. Recent accomplishments of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space while contributing to the efficiency of the Organization in pursuing its goals also indicated that that Committee was one of the bodies most able to respond to the needs of the global society and take concrete action based on mutual cooperation, trust and confidence among Member States.

43. Speaking as the representative of Chile, he said that from 12 to 16 October, a regional preparatory conference for UNISPACE III had been held in Concepción, Chile. Representatives from Latin America, along with representatives of the Caribbean countries, had carried out the task entrusted to them and prepared the Concepción declaration. On behalf of his Government, he officially requested that the declaration should be circulated as a General Assembly document at the current session. In addition, he requested that a paragraph taking note of the

adoption of the Concepción declaration should be included in the draft resolution adopted every year by the Committee on the item "International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space".

The meeting rose at 11.50 a.m.

United Nations A/C.4/53/SR.11

General Assembly
Fifty-third session

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 11th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Monday, 26 October 1998, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Macedo ..... (Mexico)

Contents

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*)

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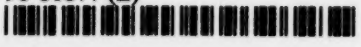
98-81877 (E)



The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/53/20, A/53/265, A/C.4/53/8)

1. **The Chairman** drew attention to the Concepción Declaration (A/C.4/53/8), adopted at the Regional Preparatory Conference for the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III) held in Concepción, Chile earlier in the month.

2. **Mr. Hong Je Ryong** (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his Government attached great significance to the development of space technology and had established its own space industry: an artificial satellite had recently been successfully launched, and further accomplishments were imminent. Every State had a legitimate right to develop its own space programmes to suit its particular situation, and it was regrettable that a few countries still took a suspicious view of developing countries' efforts in that connection, even, on occasion, alleging that they threatened international peace and security. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea considered that, on the contrary, it could best contribute to the promotion of international cooperation in the peaceful use of outer space by enhancing its own space capability. Due attention should, of course, be given to preventing an arms race in outer space.

3. Outer space was part of the common heritage of mankind, and international cooperation should serve to promote the application of space technology for the well-being of all. It was therefore to be hoped that space-related workshops, training courses and the like for the developing countries would continue to be organized in the context of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications.

4. **Ms. Escobar** (Mexico) commended the work done by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). Its report pointed the way ahead for international cooperation in space. Space science offered various potentially useful spin-off benefits in such fields as environmental protection, information technology and exploration of the solar system, and Mexico supported its development for the economic, social and cultural benefit of all humanity. International scientific research in the field of space technology, properly applied, could serve the sustainable development of the developing countries. Among those applications, her Government attached particular importance to the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge about the earth, the use of "K" waves, experimental satellites for cartography and communications, health (especially what was known as "telemedicine"), education, the study of climate change and the investigation of such phenomena as El Niño, search and rescue at sea, the prevention and mitigation of natural disasters, and environmental monitoring. Accordingly, her Government had participated actively in the work of COPUOS and proposed to continue to do so in the future. It was looking forward to UNISPACE III. It was also establishing, jointly with Brazil, a regional centre for space education serving Latin America and the Caribbean.

5. **Mr. Islam** (Pakistan) noted with satisfaction that COPUOS had done excellent work in promoting cooperation among the Member States in the field of the exploration and peaceful use of outer space. Significant progress had been made in implementing the recommendations of the Second United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE 82), and there was every reason to look forward hopefully to UNISPACE III as a prospective major turning-point which would establish new parameters of cooperation in space technology and the sharing of its benefits.

6. It was to be hoped that further progress would be made on space debris mitigation measures and the enforcement of the international legal framework governing space activities. The potential spin-off benefits of space technology were considerable, and those benefits must be fairly shared, without discrimination towards States that lacked their own space capability. States with such capability had a special responsibility for promoting international cooperation in the exploration and peaceful use of outer space. A comprehensive convention to prevent an arms race in outer space was essential, and there again the States with substantial space capability had a crucial role to play.

7. Pakistan had made considerable achievements in space science and technology development, notably in the fields of environmental monitoring, upper atmosphere research, satellite remote sensing, satellite design, manufacture and launching, including both low-earth-orbit satellites and satellites in geosynchronous orbit, satellite tracking, telemetry and remote control, ground receiving stations, and instrumentation and software development.

8. **Mr. Zaki** (Egypt) noted that COPUOS had been founded 40 years previously and that it had rendered invaluable service in promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space and in developing a regime of law governing that region. COPUOS would undoubtedly continue to foster regional and international

cooperation in the development of space technology and its application to a broad range of peaceful ends.

9. Egypt, aware of the potential benefits of space science, had recently established a national council for space research and technology, with a view to applying advances in those areas to its objectives of its national development.

10. It was heartening that significant progress had been made in implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, especially in fields that were of particular interest to developing countries, such as the organization of workshops and seminars on advanced applications of space science and technology and the establishment of regional training centres. The development of indigenous capabilities in developing countries continued to be an important aim. Much remained to be done in other areas as well, and accordingly his delegation wished to emphasize that Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations operating in the field of outer space should make every effort to implement the recommendations of UNISPACE 82.

11. **Mr. Hae Jin Chun** (Republic of Korea) commended the work of COPUOS over the previous 40 years, including the leading role it had played in the establishment of a legal regime on space-related issues. UNISPACE III, preparations for which were proceeding satisfactorily, would provide a useful opportunity to review progress since UNISPACE 82 and strengthen multilateral cooperation in the field of outer space. In his delegation's view, UNISPACE III should be a global forum in which non-governmental organizations and the private sector would participate alongside Governments and international organizations, as both had significant roles to play in the important area of space science and technology development. The Republic of Korea was committed to active participation in the work of preparing for UNISPACE III. It also wished to become a full member of COPUOS.

12. **Mr. Apunte** (Ecuador) expressed satisfaction at the progress of preparations for UNISPACE III, which promised to give further impetus to international cooperation for the peaceful uses of outer space. Such cooperation deserved priority because, as the General Assembly had noted in its resolution 52/56, the benefits of space technology should be disseminated to all countries, especially developing countries.

13. While the private sector was playing a steadily growing role in the application of space technology to economic development, space-related activities were no longer the exclusive preserve of a few countries, but were becoming a means of drawing nations together and affording fresh opportunities for international cooperation. Accordingly, it was important to ensure that the resulting benefits were not monopolized by a few countries or a few private firms. That would be a violation of the Outer Space Treaty, which emphasized the principle of cooperation and required the interests of other States to be taken duly into account.

14. He welcomed the agreement by Mexico and Brazil to establish a space science and technology training centre, which would undoubtedly help to meet the needs and interests of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

15. The question of the geostationary orbit was of considerable importance in the context of the fair and rational use of outer space for the benefit of all countries, especially developing countries. In that connection, the documents submitted by the Czech Republic and Colombia contained much valuable material which would be useful for the purposes of the establishment of a special legal regime governing outer space.

16. **Mr. Hodgkins** (United States of America) said that his delegation continued to believe that in establishing COPUOS, the General Assembly had intended that Committee to concern itself exclusively with promoting international cooperation in the peaceful uses of space, and that the First Committee of the General Assembly and the Conference on Disarmament were the competent multilateral forums for discussion of the disarmament aspects of outer space. He reiterated his delegation's support for the decision by COPUOS to meet in an expanded session in 1999, known as UNISPACE III, to consider space benefits for mankind in the twenty-first century. That session had been organized in such a way as to guarantee that its goals would be achieved within the existing resources of COPUOS and its secretariat. The organizational structure of UNISPACE III should serve as a model for the rest of the United Nations when planning similar conferences, and the work of the Office of Outer Space Affairs in preparing for UNISPACE III should make the event a great success. However, the United States was deeply concerned that the senior leadership of the Office might be changed in 1998. In the light of the central role to be played by it in deliberations on a range of issues of great importance to the future of space exploration, it was only fitting that the views of Member States on actions affecting its leadership should be fully taken into account.

17. **Mr. Natalegawa** (Indonesia) said that UNISPACE III would afford a unique opportunity for the international community to appraise accomplishments in the peaceful uses of outer space as well as collective efforts to promote

international cooperation in that field for the benefit of all humanity. His delegation was pleased to note that priority consideration had been given to the implementation of the recommendations of the United Nations Programme on Space Applications, although the Working Group of the Whole of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee continued to be affected by a lack of sound financial support. Indonesia reiterated its call for all States, particularly those with space capabilities, to continue and increase their contributions to the Working Group.

18. The choice of space-based meteorology as the focus of the thirty-fifth session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee had been most appropriate; cooperation and free information exchange in that field should be strengthened in order to increase its beneficial adaptation to the needs of individual countries. His delegation also welcomed the continued priority consideration of the problem of space debris, and called for intensified cooperation among member States in formulating effective strategies to minimize the potential impact of space debris on future space missions as well as to protect the terrestrial environment.

19. Indonesia welcomed the continued priority given to consideration of the definition and delimitation of outer space and the utilization of the geostationary orbit in the Legal Subcommittee, and stressed the need for genuine negotiations on the establishment of a legal regime governing the use of the geostationary orbit which would ensure equitable access to that limited resource. COPUOS was the appropriate body to elaborate such a legal regime, while the International Telecommunications Union was the relevant agency for dealing with the technical aspects of the geostationary orbit.

20. He stressed the importance of access to advanced space technology for developing countries, in order that those countries might better meet their development needs and thus make even greater contributions to global sustainable development. It was also important to take into account the views and needs of developing countries in considering the current international legal instruments governing outer space, with a view to focusing current space applications programmes towards promoting greater equity in meeting the interests of the developing countries.

21. **Mr. Dausá** (Cuba) said that the concept of outer space as the common heritage of mankind comprised three fundamental principles to be observed by all States.

22. The first, which was the cornerstone of the work of COPUOS, was the need to reserve outer space for purely peaceful uses, and to promote international cooperation in the use of outer space for those purposes, taking into account the need to maintain continued economic growth and sustainable development for all countries, especially developing countries. As the new millennium approached, it was necessary to reduce the enormous gulf that separated the great majority of developing countries from the developed countries in the area of space science and technology.

23. The second principle, of equal importance, was based on the need to prevent an arms race in outer space. In that regard, the Cuban delegation wished to make clear its objection to the obstruction, by some nuclear Powers with their own space programmes, of progress in the Conference on Disarmament towards an agreement or international instrument preventing arms races in outer space.

24. The third principle involved the logic of space law. Cuba shared the view that the international instruments currently in force with regard to outer space were inadequate to prevent an arms race there, and that effective and verifiable new measures were needed to enforce the exclusively peaceful use of outer space.

25. UNISPACE III would be of particular importance for promoting more dynamic, harmonious and equitable international cooperation in the field of outer space, and the recent Latin American and Caribbean regional conference had undertaken valuable preparatory work for that event. However, greater attention needed to be paid to the problem of space object collisions and space debris, and existing technology for monitoring such debris needed to be improved.

26. **Mr. Tarabrin** (Russian Federation) said that the work of COPUOS needed to reflect more adequately the increasingly universal importance of the peaceful uses of outer space. His delegation could not agree with the proposal to reduce the status of COPUOS and its subcommittees, or to transfer its function of developing legal principles governing outer space to other technical organizations and forums, as doing so would have a negative impact on all international cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space. While the work of COPUOS needed reform, there was also a need to preserve the principle of consensus decision-making in that Committee and its subsidiary bodies.

27. UNISPACE III should be a non-politicized showcase for the space achievements of all the countries of the world, demonstrating the economic benefits of space technology and contributing to practical, equitable and mutually beneficial cooperation in outer space. The successful development of international cooperation in space at the regional and bilateral levels, and providing a long-term legal

foundation for that cooperation, could not substitute for the progressive development and adaptation of the universal norms and principles governing such cooperation.

28. **Mr. Acosta Fragachan** (Venezuela) said that his delegation welcomed the work of COPUOS, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Working Group of the Whole on implementing the recommendations of UNISPACE 82, especially with regard to the preparation of scholarship programmes to support in-depth training courses in advanced space science and technology and the establishment of regional space science and technology study centres in developing countries.

29. His delegation was also encouraged by the work being undertaken to prepare for UNISPACE III, in particular the regional preparatory conferences already held or planned for the immediate future. It welcomed the contribution of COPUOS to strengthening international instruments governing the peaceful uses of outer space, by means of the creation of norms and principles regulating space exploration and keeping it free of the contradictions entailed by the arms race.

30. He reiterated the importance of the topic of space debris, as well as his concern regarding the problem of collisions of space objects. His delegation awaited the report of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in that regard.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.

United Nations A/C.4/53/SR.12

General Assembly
Fifty-third session

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 12th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Tuesday, 27 October 1998, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Macedo ..... (Mexico)

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Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*)

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98-81913 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.35 a.m.

Agenda item 82: International cooperation in the peaceful uses of outer space (*continued*) (A/53/20, A/53/265, A/C.4/53/L.7)

1. **Mr. Semenenko** (Ukraine) said that, for 40 years, the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) had played a major part in helping interested Member States in the practical applications of space technologies and had thereby made a contribution to the efforts of the United Nations to promote international cooperation in that field.

2. His country hoped that the Third United Nations Conference on the Exploration and Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III), which was to be held in Vienna in the following year, would give new impetus to strengthening the capabilities of Member States, in particular the developing countries, in the application of space research for their economic and scientific development. His country had been participating very successfully in a number of international space projects. One of them, which was of special significance for his country was the historic mission of the first Ukrainian spaceman Leonid Kadenyuk as a member of the United States Shuttle Colombia Space Mission in November 1997. The utilization of Ukrainian launch vehicles in a number of international space programmes, 47 of which had been launched, putting 80 space satellites into orbit during the previous seven years, was further evidence of the recognition of his country's scientific and technological achievements.

3. Of special importance among the international space exploration programmes was the "Sea-Launch" project involving Ukraine, the Russian Federation, Norway and the United States of America. It was a very good example of how the scientific and technological potential of different nations could serve the common interest. It was a very promising beginning aimed at commercial purposes only which, in the long run, was capable of bringing many benefits to a large number of countries. Services in that connection would not be offered to countries or organizations that wished to use the project for other than peaceful purposes. The first commercial launch under that project was scheduled for April 1999 when the modified new generation Russian-Ukrainian "Dnipro" booster would put into orbit two British SSTL satellites.

4. The fact that his country had so far signed agreements on cooperation in the field of space research with 23 countries, in particular the Russian Federation, the United States of America, China, Brazil and India, was evidence of its potential for developing international cooperation in that field. All the prerequisites were in place in his country for the establishment of a powerful air-space branch, with the adoption of the required laws and the introduction of the National Space Programme.

5. Scientific and technological progress produced new tasks in the exploration of outer space. In the coming decade more than 1,000 new communication satellites were scheduled to be put into orbit. More and more space vehicles were planned to be launched into space to help countries in resolving their scientific, social and economic problems. That and other objectives could be attained only through the development of close, mutually beneficial cooperation among all the interested Member States. In that connection, his country suggested that COPUOS should strengthen its leading role in promoting and coordinating international cooperation for the use of outer space for peaceful purposes and direct that cooperation to the benefit of all mankind.

6. **Mr. Gonzalez** (Chile), speaking on behalf of the member States of MERCOSUR and associated countries, said that the current session of the Committee was being held on the eve of the convening of UNISPACE III which would meet from 19 to 30 July 1999 in Vienna.

7. It was well known that the Second World Conference on that subject, UNISPACE 82, had taken place under completely different circumstances at a time when antagonism prevailed in relations between countries and when there were even acts of open hostility that were not conducive to mutual understanding. In spite of the fact that the final report of UNISPACE 82 had made a whole series of recommendations, they had not led to any substantial practical results. A new model of international relations had begun to take shape since the end of the cold war, based on the concept of international cooperation, which far transcended the framework of mere coexistence. That approach should underpin the agreements which would undoubtedly be concluded at UNISPACE III.

8. In addition, there was increasing recognition of the necessity of an agreed solution to problems that threatened international security, such as environmental conservation, education, information and mitigating the consequences of natural disasters. Those problems, which were reflected in the agenda of UNISPACE III, could not be resolved without the requisite international cooperation.

9. Thanks to the radical change in the international situation, that new model, given political will on the part of all States, was more likely to be manifested in

international relations. In that connection, he recalled General Assembly resolution 51/122 and also the Punta del Este Declaration adopted by the Third Space Conference of the Americas. Those instruments, in the same way as Agenda 21, had clearly reflected the tendency towards cooperation on the basis of the principle of a just and equitable relationship towards all parties. In that connection space technology could be said to be of the greatest value in resolving such problems.

10. However, it was impossible to account for the fact that space technologies, which were so conducive to the solution of practical problems facing mankind, were not used by those who were responsible for taking political decisions as an inseparable part of their activities to resolve complex humanitarian situations. In other words, there was no connection between technical progress and the utilization of its benefits at the global level. While acknowledging that the principal responsibility in that connection lay with the industrially developed countries, he said, by way of self-criticism that, as the Concepción Declaration, adopted at the preparatory regional conference for UNISPACE III in October 1998 showed, the countries of the region themselves also had work to do in preparing the essential institutional machinery for mutual contacts.

11. All the countries he represented were fully convinced that UNISPACE III would provide a means of determining practical forms of international cooperation taking into account the recent trends in the development of international space law. Moreover, they considered that, in order to provide an effective solution for current problems of a transnational nature, it was essential to adopt an integrated approach in which the ethical dimension was of the greatest importance. One must not regard with indifference the evil being committed in various parts of the world such as the forced displacement of persons and breaches of human rights. In that context, he also recalled the rapacious exploitation of natural resources, primarily by the developed countries, which was damaging to all mankind.

12. From the results of the series of major United Nations conferences held in recent years, it could be concluded on the one hand that there was a need for such joint and coordinated efforts, but on the other that there was a lack of understanding of how important access to knowledge and information about natural resources could be for addressing the problems which those very conferences had been devoted to.

13. The member countries of MERCOSUR reiterated their support for the work of COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies, which must continue seeking solutions to the problems as yet unresolved, and also to new problems. One of the most important issues was the problem of space debris, and a solution to it must be found as soon as possible, given the huge number of satellites which were gradually breaking down and which posed a danger to the Earth's population. In addition, new problems were before COPUOS in the legal field, and were discussed in the latest report of the Legal Subcommittee. In that connection, the establishment of a generally acceptable legal framework taking into account the dynamic development of contemporary international law was a task that the international community should support in every way possible so as to ensure that technology would serve and not impede increased human well-being.

14. Speaking in his capacity as the Vice-Chairman of COPUOS, he expressed his deep concern at the conditions in the Outer Space Affairs Division, which would soon undergo serious changes.

15. Supporting the statement made the previous day by the representative of the United States of America, he noted that it would be extremely unwise to dismiss the important contribution the Division and its Director had made to the preparatory activities for UNISPACE III. Without support from the Secretariat the success of the Conference would be extremely limited. He therefore officially requested the Chairman of the Fourth Committee to bring that matter to the attention of the Secretary-General, and of the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna, in order to convey to them the Committee's concern that the human resources of the Outer Space Affairs Division should remain unaffected.

16. **The Chairman** said he was sure that the Secretariat would draw attention to the concern raised by the Vice-Chairman of COPUOS, undertook to inform the President of the General Assembly, and said he was sure that the matter would be brought to the attention of the Secretary-General.

Draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.7

17. **Mr. Sinha** (India), speaking on behalf of the Working Group of the Whole on International Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space, drew attention to draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.7 and expressed his appreciation in particular to the Director of the Outer Space Affairs Division and his colleagues for their invaluable assistance. The draft was based on the resolution on that agenda item submitted at the previous session, with the exception of a series of paragraphs having to do with UNISPACE III.

18. A new preambular paragraph reflected the decision taken by the General Assembly at its previous session to convene the Conference. In accordance with the request of the General Assembly, COPUOS and its Scientific and Technical Subcommittee would fulfil the roles of Preparatory Committee and Advisory Committee, respectively, for UNISPACE III. On the basis of the work of the Advisory Committee and the Preparatory Committee, a series of recommendations had been made on the preparation of a draft report and provisional rules of procedure for UNISPACE III, and also on the participation of international organizations involved in outer space affairs and the private sector. The results of the Preparatory Committee's discussions and the decisions submitted by it were reflected in paragraphs 21 to 26. Paragraph 23 reflected the results of the preparatory regional conferences.

19. In accordance with established practice, pre-conference consultations would be convened just before the Conference, as mentioned in paragraph 27. Paragraph 28 reflected the request of the General Assembly to UNISPACE III to submit to it at its next session a report on the results of the Conference.

20. The Preparatory and Advisory Committees would complete the preparations for UNISPACE III at their 1999 sessions. Paragraph 18 reflected the agreement that the Advisory Committee should reconvene the Working Group of the Whole to assist it in its work.

21. In order to provide for the convening of UNISPACE III within existing resources, the duration of the work of COPUOS and its subsidiary bodies for 1999 would, exceptionally, be reduced. The decisions concerning the programme of work for the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee for 1999 and 2000 were reflected in paragraphs 13 to 15. In view of the reduced timetable of the Subcommittee's work and taking into account the preparations for UNISPACE III, COPUOS had agreed that the agenda of the Subcommittee for the coming year would include consideration of the priority issues listed in paragraph 13. On an exceptional basis, consideration of the other issues listed in paragraph 14 would be postponed by one year and would be resumed in the year 2000. In addition, paragraph 29 listed the items on the agenda of COPUOS whose consideration would be postponed until the year 2000.

22. The Working Group had also discussed the issue of participation of the greatest possible number of developing countries in UNISPACE III. In the view of the Working Group, that issue should be brought to the attention of the Preparatory Committee. The Outer Space Affairs Division, in its capacity as the executive secretariat for UNISPACE III, was requested to study all the possibilities for attracting voluntary contributions and to report on that matter to the Preparatory Committee. The Working Group believed that the matter should be reflected in the report of the Fourth Committee.

23. Issues relating to consideration of the item on space debris by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee were dealt with in paragraph 11. The decision regarding the agenda item dealing with the use of nuclear power sources in outer space was reflected in paragraph 16.

24. COPUOS had drawn attention to the fact that the Legal Subcommittee had begun its consideration of a new agenda item entitled "Review of the status of the five international legal instruments governing outer space", and had recommended that the Subcommittee should establish a working group to consider the item at its next session, as noted in paragraph 4 (c).

25. In conclusion, he proposed that in accordance with established practice draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.7 should be adopted without a vote.

26. **Mr. Sai** (Algeria) noted that the French text of the draft resolution was missing a page.

27. **The Chairman** said that the Secretariat had taken note of that error and would rectify it. In accordance with the decision taken the day before, rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the Fourth Committee would not be applied. If he heard no objection, he would take it that the Committee wished to adopt draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.7 without a vote.

28. *Draft resolution A/C.4/53/L.7 was adopted without a vote.*

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.

United Nations A/C.4/53/SR.13

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Special Political and Decolonization Committee (Fourth Committee)

Summary record of the 13th meeting
Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 29 October 1998, at 10 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. Macedo ..... (Mexico)

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Agenda item 85: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects

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98-81961 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 85: Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects (A/53/127 and A/C.4/53/L.8)

1. **The Chairman** drew the attention of Committee members to the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/53/127) and to the draft resolution contained in document A/C.4/53/L.8.

2. **Mr. Zaki** (Egypt), speaking as the Rapporteur of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, introduced the report of the Special Committee, and said that the cornerstone of the report remained its assertion that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security lay with the United Nations and that peacekeeping continued to be one of the key instruments available to it in discharging that responsibility.

3. Concerning the implementation of mandates, the Special Committee had emphasized the need for clearly defined mandates, objectives and command structures, as well as secure funding. The Special Committee had also addressed the ways in which it felt that changes of mandate needed to be handled.

4. On the issue of consultations involving troop-contributing countries, prospective troop contributors, the Security Council and the Secretariat, the Special Committee had urged all parties concerned to make full use of the arrangements in place. It had also encouraged the Security Council to take steps more formally to ensure the rigorous, timely and systematic implementation of those arrangements.

5. Within the issue of enhancing capacity, the Special Committee had distinguished such aspects as personnel, organization, planning and coordination, security, training, standby arrangements and rapid deployment, civilian police and financing.

6. In the section concerning personnel matters, there were references to the need for expeditious phase-out of gratis personnel in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) while maintaining operational capacity, and to the importance of expediting the staff recruitment process on a broad geographical basis. The Committee had also urged the enhancement of efforts to improve the selection, recruitment and preparation of senior military commanders, civilian police commissioners and chief administrative officers. An important innovation in the report had been the Committee's request concerning testimony of peacekeepers before international criminal tribunals. It had encouraged the Secretariat to provide information on the procedures that should be applied in such cases, and develop guidelines for the application of such procedures.

7. With regard to organization, planning and coordination of the Department's activities, the Committee had deemed that a more fundamental review was required of its organization, structure and staffing. In the same context, the Committee had addressed such issues as the role and functions of special representatives of the Secretary-General, the recent efforts in military-civilian coordination, the importance of timely, efficient, transparent and cost-effective procurement and the broadening of both the procurement roster and the range of procurement information available. In that connection, the Committee had addressed issues of progress on a coherent and comprehensive concept for logistical support. It commended the exceptional efforts in the development of the new field assets control system.

8. In the section on safety and security, the Committee had condemned the acts perpetrated against peacekeepers and urged the ratification of the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel.

9. With regard to training of personnel, the Committee had underlined the valuable role that the United Nations should play in addition to the primary role of Member States. It had referred specifically to the United Nations facilities in that field and the full use that should be made of them, as well as the importance of training materials.

10. In examining the question of civilian police and noting their increasing role and participation in peacekeeping operations, the Committee had emphasized that police and military tasks must be clearly differentiated; civilian police elements must be fully integrated into peacekeeping planning; the Secretariat must develop draft guidelines on general principles; Member States must enhance their national recruitment procedures with a view to ensuring the highest quality in deployment, and the Civilian Police Unit must be strengthened.

11. On the subject of standby arrangements and rapid deployment, the Committee had emphasized that the United Nations should be able rapidly to deploy a peacekeeping operation on the adoption of an authorizing mandate by the Security Council. The Committee had underscored its support for such arrangements, while also noting the continued lack of certain key resources for its adequate functioning.

12. With regard to finances, the Committee had urged that measures should be taken to achieve further progress on such issues as reimbursement of government expenses, liquidation of completed operations, and contingent-owned equipment

leases. It had also expressed satisfaction at the results achieved in areas ranging from the uniformity of death and disability compensation to the acceleration in the clearing of claims.

13. The remaining section of the report concentrated on cooperation with regional arrangements and agencies, acknowledged their important contribution in maintaining security and stability and urged the strengthening of cooperation with them. It devoted particular attention to the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the question of strengthening its institutional capacity, and the Committee encouraged the Secretary-General's intention to hold periodic meetings on that issue.

14. **Mr. Miyet** (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations) said that the United Nations had recently held a solemn ceremony on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of peacekeeping at which a draft declaration had been adopted commemorating those who had served in peacekeeping operations and the first Dag Hammarskjöld medals had been awarded. That event had reaffirmed the unflagging commitment of Member States to joint work and cooperation with the Secretariat in the cause of peace. It had provided a real stimulus to all those who, as members of police forces, military contingents and observers — nearly 14,500 persons in all — were currently serving the international community, courageously and unselfishly, in conflict zones around the world.

15. From time to time in recent years it had been suggested that United Nations peacekeeping activities were in decline. The view had also been expressed that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security could more appropriately be transferred to the regional,. subregional and multinational levels. The Secretariat noted with satisfaction the peacekeeping efforts undertaken at those levels and had, in several cases, cooperated closely in their realization. Nevertheless, in keeping with the spirit and letter of Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Organization must remain the cornerstone of the maintenance of international peace and security. A new awareness was spreading of the advantages that the Organization had in that sphere, and such a trend could only be regarded as highly positive. It was increasingly recognized that the United Nations, for both political and practical reasons, played an irreplaceable role. Its operations constituted a legitimate form of outside intervention, made it possible to reconcile opposing points of view and offered a means of resolving local issues by focusing the attention of the international community on them.

16. The past year had been marked by both successes and failures. Threats had been made against members of missions, hostage-taking incidents had occurred and, tragically, both the military and the civilian contingents had suffered losses. In June, a tragic air crash had claimed the lives of Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, five of his colleagues and two pilots. In July, four peacekeepers had been brutally and deliberately murdered in Tajikistan. Unfortunately, many other such tragic events had taken place. That had not, however, prevented the deployment, by decision of the Security Council, of two new peacekeeping missions: the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA), which had undoubtedly played a positive and stabilizing role in a region now so troubled, and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). The latter was a new example of constructive support by the United Nations for efforts undertaken at the subregional and regional levels to restore legitimate State institutions and stabilize the situation in the country and the subregion. Recently, the operation in Croatia had been concluded successfully; a portion of the responsibilities previously carried out by a civilian police contingent of the United Nations Temporary Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES) had been transferred to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). That example could serve as a model of cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE. United Nations peacekeeping operations, of which there were now 16, had played a decisive role in the past year in the international community's efforts on behalf of peace, and there was no doubt that they would continue to do so in the future.

17. With regard to the specific recommendations contained in the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, he noted that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations had prepared a draft report on efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity, and was initiating consultations with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in order to finalize the text. In terms of long-term efforts to enhance African peacekeeping capacity, a training strategy was being developed in cooperation with Member States; it was hoped that a working group could be formed, composed of representatives of African and non-African States directly involved in the provision of training assistance. The Department had offered to serve, in close cooperation with OAU, as the focal point for the collection and dissemination of information on African capacity for peacekeeping and intended to post such information on the Internet by the end of the year.

18. The follow-up to the Secretary-General's report on Africa would continue so as to ensure that the declaration of political support made at two ministerial-level meetings of the Security Council was reflected in tangible, practical ways.

19. Real progress in that area would depend upon close cooperation with Member States and the allocation of the necessary resources; in that connection, he strongly encouraged Member States to explore ways of promoting that process, including through contributions to the United Nations trust fund established for that purpose.

20. The Department had given special attention to the emerging role of civilian police in peacekeeping operations, which represented a new dimension of the efforts to respond effectively to the complex problems posed by civil conflict. Nevertheless, the conceptual basis for the use of police forces had not yet been worked out. The seminar on the issue convened by the Department, the report of which had been circulated to all Member States, had made it possible to initiate a thorough study of the question. Following the seminar, certain Member States had shown interest in pursuing consideration of the issue, including through follow-up seminars and practical studies. Nevertheless, general principles concerning the role of civilian police had yet to be elaborated.

21. The Department was continuing to promote the highest standards of efficiency in all areas of activity, particularly in the administrative, logistical and financial fields. The smooth and timely deployment of MINURCA was evidence of the improved capacity of the Field Administration and Logistics Division to deploy the troops required to start up a mission within a very short period of time. Moreover, in response to the concerns expressed by the Secretary-General and in recognition of the complex demands of field service, the Department was reinforcing its guidelines to ensure that all peacekeepers were of an appropriate age and had appropriate experience. The Department would ask that civilian police and military observers younger than 25 years not be sent to serve in peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, national contingent soldiers should preferably be 21 years of age, and definitely not under 18, when deployed in United Nations peacekeeping operations. That policy should also serve as an example for police and military forces worldwide at a time when too many children were being recruited to participate in armed conflicts, which was unacceptable.

22. As urged by the Special Committee, the phasing out of gratis personnel was under way and proceeding rapidly. An expedited process of recruitment, with due regard to geographical representation and gender balance, had begun, in order to minimize disruption during the transition period. With regard to gender balance, some difficulties had arisen: of the total of 1,077 applications, only 30 had been from women. However, there had been an increase in women at the senior levels in the field. One Special Representative of the Secretary-General was a woman, as were one deputy Special Representative and one deputy Head of Mission. There was still a long way to go, but the process was moving in the right direction. In its report, the Special Committee had stressed the need to provide adequate funding for appropriate posts. In that context, he noted that the General Assembly had approved 55 additional posts for the Department, of which 48 represented conversions of gratis positions, and had recommended redeployment of 23 posts.

23. The financial and administrative arrangements agreed to over the past five years had been used to build an effective tool to cope with new challenges. However, it should be noted that there was no automatic proportionate relation between the total numbers of personnel in peacekeeping operations or figures for the budget, on one hand, and Headquarters requirements on the other. The number of peacekeeping operations being planned and conducted, rather than the number of personnel deployed, determined the extent of work required. The labour necessary to prepare documents on status of forces or rules of engagement did not change according to the number of military person[illegible]. At the same time, the trend towards smaller operations having a greater proportion of specialized units, military observers and police meant that today's missions required greater per capita administrative and logistic support than when the number of persons deployed had been at its peak.

24. The Department was continuing to review the implications of the General Assembly's decision. However, it should be remembered that the substantial net decline in staffing would inevitably affect the Department's capacity to discharge effectively the duties assigned to it, although it would do its best to alleviate those consequences.

25. During the past year, certain modifications had been made in the Department's structure. The Situation Centres had been placed within the responsibility of the Office of Operations, while the Lessons Learned Unit and the Policy and Analysis Unit were being integrated. That revision of the structure of the Department took into account the experience accumulated over the past five years and responded to the constraints imposed by the phasing out of gratis personnel. The basic structure of the Department was sound, and some of the adaptations mentioned would enable it to discharge its mandated responsibilities. For

peacekeeping to reach its potential, the Secretariat and the Member States must work in partnership.

26. **Mr. Haekkerup** (Denmark) said that his country aligned itself with the statement that would be made later that day on behalf of the European Union. The United Nations could look with pride at the results of its peacekeeping activities. Over the years those activities had saved countless lives, prevented the escalation of conflicts, overseen the birth of new nations and assisted in comprehensive political solutions. The strength of peacekeeping lay in its flexibility. It was not a narrowly defined concept; there were basic rules, but they were derived from the rules upon which the Organization was founded. The weaknesses of United Nations peacekeeping were neither structural nor inherent, and its role and possibilities depended on the support and commitment of the international community.

27. It was the responsibility of Member States to provide the United Nations with the financial and human resources needed to carry out its tasks. It was also necessary to ensure that adequate mandates were given, reflecting the situation on the ground, with appropriate force structures and the necessary means to carry out a given mission.

28. Peacekeeping forces should be made up of well-trained troops, well-equipped to carry out their mission and sensitized to the problems underlying the need for their intervention. The Member States could assist in achieving those goals by expanding assistance and sharing experience in peacekeeping training and capacity-building. Thus, Denmark had helped to strengthen the peacekeeping capacity of the Baltic States.

29. Impartiality in a peacekeeping force did not mean being passive, and a peacekeeping force must be given the means to carry out its tasks. As the Secretary-General had pointed out, sometimes a convincing show of force could prevent the need for its use. Good intentions often had to be backed by such a show of force.

30. Turning to the question of unity of effort, he welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General now as a rule appointed special representatives for peacekeeping missions and that both the special representative and other key personnel were selected after a careful screening process. The special representative of the Secretary-General must be given the overall responsibility for all United Nations efforts, including the efforts of specialized agencies working in a mission area. He must also have a coordinating responsibility in relation to other international agencies and non-governmental organizations.

31. It was also necessary to reflect on the right time for the deployment of the various elements of a mission. The importance of police elements to a peacekeeping mission would grow, and it was important to choose the right phase for their deployment. A police element would be most efficient once the initial stabilization phase had ended and an operation moved towards consolidation and rebuilding. It was also necessary to pay more attention to public information, which should be an integral part of every peacekeeping mission. A public information component would be needed in order to inform both the local population and the international media.

32. More attention must be paid to civil-military cooperation. A peacekeeping mission was a joint endeavour and both the civil organizations — United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations — and the military needed to work closely together. In order to work together effectively, they must learn to understand each other, and that was a process that started well before deployment. In Danish military training and preparation for missions, cooperation with civil organizations and NGOs had been included.

33. There were situations in which the ability of the United Nations to react rapidly to a crisis once the Security Council had decided to act was far more crucial than the size of the force. The Secretary-General must be able to call on appropriately trained and immediately available standby forces from Member States. In certain situations, the ability to deploy rapidly would be the key to the success of the mission and to being able to prevent massive loss of life. The recent decision by the General Assembly on personnel for a Rapidly Deployable United Nations Mission Headquarters was a welcome development. The United Nations Standby System required further improvement, and Member States could help to shorten reaction times by establishing rapidly deployable units. They could also make preparations for cooperating in larger formations. An example of such cooperation between a broad group of countries was the formation of the United Nations Stand-by Forces High Readiness Brigade, which had been a result of the request by the Secretary-General that serious thought should be given to the idea of rapid reaction forces consisting of military units from a number of Member States, trained to the same standards and using the same operational procedures, stationed in their home countries but maintained in a high state of readiness.

34. In that connection, he drew attention to the need to develop further the preventive diplomacy and preventive deployment tool of the United Nations. The Secretary-General and the Security Council should use the possibilities

open to them to intervene in emerging crises before they became acute, and Member States must be willing and ready to support their efforts with the appropriate means of mediation, financial assistance and deployment, as necessary, of civil and military manpower. Early assistance and intervention would be much less costly in the long run both for troop-contributing nations and for the population in the crisis area.

35. **Mr. Hussein** (Jordan), speaking on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, said that the Movement had always considered United Nations peacekeeping to be an important instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security. Where conflicts were involved, however, peacekeeping could not be a substitute for a permanent solution or for addressing the underlying causes of such conflicts. It could be most useful when, as a temporary measure, it contributed to the maintenance of a ceasefire or a cessation of hostilities. Peacekeeping operations must conform strictly to the guiding principles contained in the report of the Special Committee for 1998. When establishing a new operation, the United Nations must continue to adhere to the basic principles that governed peacekeeping: the consent of the parties; the non-use of force, except in self-defence; impartiality; clearly defined mandates; and secure financing.

36. At their meeting in Durban, South Africa, from 29 August to 3 September 1998, the Heads of State or Government of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had reviewed, among other issues, the question of United Nations peacekeeping. They had stressed the need for the United Nations to differentiate between peacekeeping and humanitarian assistance.

37. Where gratis personnel were concerned, the Movement remained concerned over the staffing structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, in which non-aligned countries were not sufficiently represented. It emphasized the importance of having the posts previously occupied by loaned personnel filled in a manner consistent with the requirements of the Charter and on as wide a geographical basis as possible.

38. There was a need to institutionalize consultations between troop-contributing countries and the Security Council. Whenever new missions were established or existing ones expanded, it was important that the Security Council should consult prospective troop contributors at the earliest possible stage. The Council should also adopt a flexible approach to the form of those consultations, which should not be limited solely to troop contributors but should include, whenever appropriate, countries especially affected and other countries from the region concerned.

39. The planning and deployment of peacekeeping operations should be exercised within the context of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System, which was open to all Member States. The Movement had noted that the System was based on contributions from individual Member States and that there was no "United Nations" standby brigade. The name "United Nations" should not be used arbitrarily by individual States or groups in their activities without a relevant United Nations resolution.

40. The Non-Aligned Movement noted the increasing use of civilian police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations and placed heavy emphasis on developing, at the earliest possible date, agreed guidelines on the principles governing the role of civilian police personnel in peacekeeping operations.

41. The Movement continued to feel deep concern over the continued delays on the part of the United Nations in the reimbursement of troop costs and contingent-owned equipment leases.

42. The timely, efficient, transparent and cost-effective procurement of goods and services in support of peacekeeping operations was a matter of considerable importance. In procuring goods and services of equivalent standards and prices, the United Nations should give priority to developing countries, and above all to troop-contributing countries.

43. The funding of United Nations peacekeeping operations through voluntary contributions should not influence decisions by the Security Council to create peacekeeping missions, or affect their mandates.

44. Cooperation between the United Nations and regional arrangements on agencies must abide by the letter and the spirit of Chapter VIII of the Charter, and take into account the existing instruments and mechanisms operating in each of the regional arrangements or agencies concerned.

45. Lastly, with regard to the request to the Secretary-General contained in paragraph 115 of the Special Committee's report to submit a report on progress in the implementation of the Special Committee's recommendations, he hoped that it would be done at least six weeks before the spring session so that Member States could study the Secretariat's comments thoroughly and use them as a basis for discussion at the forthcoming session.

46. **Mr. Manz** (Austria), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the central and eastern European countries associated with the European Union — the Czech Republic,

Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania — and the associated country Cyprus, as well as the EFTA country member of EEA Iceland, said that in the past few years, peacekeeping operations had become increasingly multidimensional. United Nations peacekeeping now encompassed not only demanding military tasks but a variety of other functions such as civilian police activities, humanitarian assistance, demining, practical disarmament measures, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, enhancing and monitoring respect for human rights, and public information.

47. The multidimensional nature of current peacekeeping operations posed new challenges to those in the field. At Headquarters, that required an effective Department of Peacekeeping Operations which was adequately structured, staffed and prepared to plan, deploy and manage a new, more complex variety of missions.

48. It was particularly important to ensure that serving military officers and civilian police possessed the required expertise. If they did not, that would have an adverse effect on peacekeeping operations. Everything possible must be done to avoid the negative consequences of that for the safety and security of peacekeeping personnel, for the professional quality and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations and for the willingness of Member States to contribute to United Nations peacekeeping.

49. The next support account must reflect a significant restructuring of all United Nations departments dealing with peacekeeping backstopping, not only the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

50. The European Union reaffirmed its strong support for the standby arrangements and their further improvement and strengthening, and welcomed the various initiatives aimed at enhancing high readiness of national or multinational units, including through increased use of the United Nations logistics base. It expressed the hope that, in accordance with the request of the Secretary-General, military expertise would be extended to the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters; the need for that had been recognized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions. Reform of procurement rules and practice to shorten procurement times must complement those measures and form part of an integrated logistics strategy.

51. The European Union was gravely concerned about the increasing security threat to United Nations personnel in the field, not least to unarmed military observers and civilian personnel. The safety and security of United Nations personnel was of paramount importance in the discharge of peacekeeping mandates. In that connection, the European Union urged all States to ratify the 1994 Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel. The recently adopted Statute of the International Criminal Court covered, *inter alia*, the security needs of the personnel of United Nations peacekeeping missions, and the European Union urged States to sign and ratify the Statute as soon as possible.

52. He noted the establishment in 1998 of two new peacekeeping missions, MINURCA and UNOMSIL, which provided good examples of the new generation of United Nations peacekeeping operations and their manifold functions.

53. Peacekeeping was only one important element of a comprehensive set of policy measures to address and prevent violent conflict. The European Union was committed to a proactive policy for conflict prevention and resolution which focused on preventing the outbreak of such conflicts at an early stage, as well as on post-conflict peace-building and using the full range of policy instruments available, including development assistance.

54. The European Union supported the efforts of the United Nations and OAU to follow up the recommendations of the Special Committee on the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacities.

55. The European Union commended the efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen cooperation in international security between the United Nations and regional organizations. In Europe, there were many instances of successful cooperation of that kind.

56. Civilian police were playing an increasingly important role in peacekeeping and peace-building, including through monitoring respect for law enforcement standards, criminal justice standards and human rights. The European Union stressed the importance of enhanced cooperation among Member States in relation to the activity of civilian police.

57. The European Union once again expressed its grave concern at the precarious financial situation of the United Nations, caused to a large extent by the non-payment of arrears, and its adverse effects, especially in the field of peacekeeping.

58. **Mr. Üğdül** (Turkey) said that Turkey considered peacekeeping operations one of the most important tools at the disposal of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. It was prepared to continue to contribute to and diversify its presence in those operations, and it would be able to sign the memorandum of understanding determining the modalities of its contribution to the Standby Arrangements System in due time.

59. Turkey was currently taking part in four peacekeeping operations, and had also participated actively in the NATO-led operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina. On its initiative, an agreement had been signed in Skopje in 1998 for the establishment of a "Multinational Peace Force in South-Eastern Europe".

60. Another initiative by Turkey was for the creation of a "Black Sea Naval Operation Task Force", with the participation of littoral countries. In addition, an international training centre of the Turkish armed forces which would provide training for peacekeeping operations had become operational in June 1998.

61. Turkey welcomed the recent initiative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations directed towards increasing African peacekeeping activities, and was prepared to work with other Member States in exploring ways and means for enhancing Africa's peacekeeping capacity.

62. The scale of United Nations peacekeeping activities had decreased in recent years, but threats to international peace and security had not decreased commensurably. For that reason, Turkey would continue to support the strengthening of the rapid reaction capability of the United Nations. It recognized that the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters could greatly enhance the capability of the United Nations to respond to conflicts in a timely manner, and looked forward to the realization of the concept. Similarly, the United Nations Standby Arrangements System should be strengthened and enhanced. It should be acknowledged that the central element of all those capabilities was the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. Notwithstanding the decrease in the number of missions and the reduction of the total number of peacekeeping troops on the ground, the functions of DPKO had not declined. Moreover, because of the complexity of the operations mounted, more was expected of DPKO. In that connection, it should be stressed once again that the process of phasing out gratis personnel should not affect the Department's capabilities and its competence to cope with the new challenges it was facing, especially on the ground.

63. The strengthening of DPKO would automatically enhance the peacekeeping capabilities of the United Nations, which remained the sole global collective security organization and should not desist from its leading role in the promotion of international peace and security.

64. Turkey attached particular importance to the role of preventive diplomacy in peace-making efforts. It was not only a desirable and even ideal method of controlling and resolving conflicts but the most cost-effective way of doing so.

65. The role of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force (UNPREDEP) so far in the Republic of Macedonia had proved that preventive deployment, adequately mandated and supported, could make the difference between war and peace. On the other hand, there were also lessons to be learned by the United Nations from the inability of the international community to develop an adequate response to the tragedy of Kosovo which would have prevented the escalation of warfare in that region at an early stage. As the new millennium approached, the international community was duty-bound not to allow such tragic events to recur.

66. **Mr. Lavrov** (Russian Federation) said that peacekeeping operations conducted under the auspices of the United Nations were one of the most important means available for resolving crises and ensuring global and regional stability. The Russian Federation had traditionally taken an active part in international peacekeeping efforts, and a total of about 10,000 Russian military personnel and civilian police were currently involved in various peacekeeping operations.

67. In view of the continuing active demand for peacekeeping operations and their increased scope and complexity, increasing the effectiveness of the peacekeeping arsenal of the United Nations was an important priority. The development of international peacekeeping should proceed by means of the strengthening of the basic and generally recognized principles of peacekeeping operations, including the ensuring of political direction and control of the operations by the Security Council, impartiality, the agreement of the parties and clearly defined mandates supported by adequate resources.

68. Peacekeeping operations were not an end in themselves, but an important means for achieving political settlements, and that should be clearly and unambiguously reflected in their mandates.

69. One of the most important lessons of the first multi-purpose peacekeeping operations was the need to draw a clear line between peacekeeping operations and coercive operations. The latter could be carried out only by decision of the Security Council, under its political and operational control, and only in those exceptional cases where all other means not involving the use of force had been exhausted.

70. Force must be used in an extremely responsible manner in order to ensure the safety of United Nations personnel.

71. Peacekeeping operations with a humanitarian component were increasingly coming to the fore, and raised a number of difficult political, legal and operational problems. The dangerous "interventionist reflex" could be

overcome by obtaining the consent of the host nation's Government and in relevant cases of the parties to the conflict.

72. The tendency towards increasing the proportion of the civilian component of peacekeeping operations was reflected in a more active involvement of civilian police forces in operations, which in practice promoted confidence- and security-building, prevention of the escalation and spread of conflicts and the establishment of bases for post-conflict rehabilitation. A good example was the experience of the IPTF activities in Bosnia. At the same time, civilian police functions should not be mixed with the tasks of an operation's military component, and the military should not be burdened by police functions.

73. The issue of "coalition operations" was becoming topical. The need to take careful account of the specifics of a given situation which directly influenced the choice of an optimum format for international peacekeeping efforts was becoming increasingly understood. Given the reality of the limited resources of the United Nations, the conduct of peacekeeping operations by interested States in the framework of "once-only coalitions" or multinational forces on a regional or subregional basis was justified under certain circumstances. Nevertheless, such innovations in peacekeeping practice should be completely adapted to the purposes and principles of the Charter, while corresponding multinational or coalition operations, especially those of a compulsory nature, could be conducted only with the approval of the Security Council. In essence, the creation of such coalitions or multinational forces was a matter of entering into "once-only" regional arrangements fully covered by Article 53 of the Charter. The experience of Bosnia, Albania and Haiti showed that meeting those conditions was a vital prerequisite for the success of such operations.

74. The Russian Federation consistently advocated improvement of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations under Articles 52 and 53 of Chapter VIII of the Charter, and welcomed the trend that had become evident in recent years towards expanding practical interaction in that area. Concrete parameters for such cooperation should be drawn up on the basis of the indisputability of the Security Council's primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security.

75. The interaction of the United Nations with regional organizations was of special importance to the Russian Federation in the light of the growing cooperation between the United Nations and the Commonwealth of Independent States in conflict settlement in the territory of the Commonwealth. However, the problem of the international community's financial support for peacekeeping efforts in the Commonwealth of Independent States remained acute, and the Russian Federation expected a more constructive response to the repeated appeals in that respect by the Russian Federation and its partners in the Commonwealth.

76. The need to strengthen the key role of the United Nations in peacekeeping made it important to enhance the capacity of the United Nations for rapid crisis response. The Russian Federation enthusiastically supported the efforts being made by Member States and the Secretariat to increase the efficiency of operational deployment and enhance the resource base, and was ready to accelerate practical cooperation in that respect. The most efficient means of achieving that goal remained the emerging system of standby arrangements. The Russian Federation had submitted to the Secretariat concrete proposals on its practical contribution to the Standby Arrangements System, and intended in the very near future to register its participation in that system officially and sign the related memorandum.

77. The Russian Federation, being fully aware of its responsibility as a permanent member of the Security Council, would continue to make an active practical contribution to the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations, as well as to international peace-making conducted under its auspices.

78. **Mr. Jayanama** (Thailand) said that although Thailand was not a major troop contributor to United Nations peacekeeping operations, it attached great importance to the issue, and had recently been participating more actively in United Nations peacekeeping operations. For instance, Thailand and Ireland had co-chaired the ASEAN Regional Forum Workshop on Training for United Nations Peacekeeping Operations, and on 25 September 1998 Thailand's Minister for Foreign Affairs had handed to the Secretary-General a letter indicating Thailand's readiness to join the Standby Arrangements System. Despite Thailand's difficult situation caused by the financial crisis, it would continue to support United Nations peacekeeping activities to the extent its resources permitted.

79. His delegation associated itself with the view of the representative of Jordan, who had spoken on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and noted that peacekeeping operations were increasingly being conducted in situations of intra-State conflict, were becoming more complex and sometimes included a human rights dimension. The situation became further complicated when some States perceived the Security Council to be selective in discharging its

responsibility, especially when human rights were violated. Those States did not want United Nations peacekeeping operations, which fell within the domain of the Security Council, to become involved in human rights protection, which they believed was the responsibility of other United Nations bodies. However, many intra-State conflicts and their subsequent effects on regional stability came about precisely because of human rights abuses. Accordingly, United Nations peacekeeping operations should be coordinated and conducted in close consultation with other bodies, such as the Commission on Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, whenever they had a human rights dimension.

80. Experience in recent years suggested that a kind of "peacekeeping fatigue" had set in. The political will of members of the Security Council was vital in order to ensure that United Nations operations were deployed in a more timely manner, on a non-discriminatory basis and with full respect for the basic principles contained in paragraph 47 of the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, as well as for the principles of consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except for self-defence.

81. Mandates given for United Nations peacekeeping operations in Security Council resolutions were the outcome of negotiations among the interested parties. In a number of cases, however, the mandates were ambiguous and vague, and thus difficult for peacekeepers in the field to translate into precise, practical and implementable action.

82. In addition to political will and achievable mandates, the success of United Nations peacekeeping operations must be coupled with matching resources. It was that lack of resources resulting from the United Nations financial crisis that currently constituted another challenge for peacekeeping operations. Member States should fulfil their financial obligations to the United Nations in full, on time and without conditions.

83. Those difficulties had provided the opportunity for statements to the effect that multinational forces or a "coalition of the willing" could do better than United Nations peacekeeping operations, or that the United Nations should delegate its responsibility in that area to regional groupings. However, the United Nations had the primary role in maintaining international peace and security, as prescribed by the Charter. Regional arrangements and agencies could contribute to United Nations peacekeeping operations where appropriate, and when the mandate as well as the scope of regional arrangements and/or agencies allowed them to do so. Such cooperation must, however, take into account the particularities and unique characteristics of each regional arrangement or agency.

84. After 50 years of United Nations peacekeeping, the operations had proven themselves to be an important instrument in preserving and maintaining international peace and security. However, despite their important contribution to conflict resolution, they should be only temporary measures. Unfortunately, in some situations the United Nations peacekeeping operations or activities had become permanent features of the landscape. His delegation believed that no United Nations instrument, including peacekeeping operations, could replace the political will of parties to achieve peace.

85. **Mr. Phommahaxay** (Lao People's Democratic Republic) said that United Nations peacekeeping operations were continuing to play an important role in preventing the escalation of conflict and creating conditions for the peaceful settlement of disputes. They should not, however, be regarded as a substitute for pacific means which countries might use to settle disputes. The use of force or other collective measures for dealing with threats to peace should be undertaken only as a last resort. Notwithstanding the positive developments in peacekeeping operations in recent years, his delegation shared the concern of many Member States over the increasing trend to expand the nature and scope of such operations. Therefore, the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations should continue assiduously to assess and review the question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects.

86. Given the increasing complexity and magnitude of peacekeeping operations, there was a need to take into account past lessons. For that purpose, his delegation would like to draw attention to some aspects of peacekeeping operations which it considered important. First of all, peacekeeping operations should strictly adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter, particularly the principles of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of States, as well as non-intervention in matters that were essentially within their jurisdiction. Secondly, respect for the basic principles of peacekeeping, such as the consent of the parties, impartiality and the non-use of force except in self-defence, were essential to its success. Thirdly, peacekeeping operations should be provided with clearly defined mandates, objectives and command structures, as well as secure financing. In that regard, all Member States were encouraged to pay their contributions in full and on time, in compliance with their obligations under Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter.

Lastly, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations could in certain circumstances contribute to safeguarding international peace and security.

87. The Lao People's Democratic Republic supported the development of the United Nations Standby Arrangements System, which was an important factor in the increased effectiveness and rapid deployment of troops. Any measures aimed at enhancing the rapid-deployment capability should be introduced after full discussions and consultations among Member States under the auspices of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. While welcoming the initiative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to develop and maintain an appropriate deployment capability, his delegation observed that little progress had been made in responding to the staffing and funding elements of the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters (RDMHQ). His delegation hoped that those pending issues would be adequately and expeditiously addressed and that the principle of equitable geographical distribution would be given the importance it deserved in the final selection of officers for the RDMHQ.

88. With regard to the phasing out of gratis personnel, his delegation considered that all efforts must be made to correct the existing imbalance through recruitment of personnel, both at Headquarters and in the field, on the basis of the procedures laid down in Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter.

89. Although peacekeeping operations played an important role, more attention must be given to many of the root causes of conflict such as poverty and inadequate socio-economic development. In addition, the financing of peacekeeping operations should not be at the expense of United Nations development activities.

90. **Mr. Ahmed** (Bangladesh) said that United Nations peacekeeping operations called for clearly defined mandates for accomplishing tasks that could be implemented by military forces in the course of set periods, rules for the deployment of armed forces, and an individual analysis of each situation in the field. Peace builders must abide strictly by the purposes and principles of the Charter. In addition, in the formulation and implementation of the mandates, it was essential to ensure the compatibility of the mandates, resources and objectives. In that connection, the Organization should elaborate an early-warning mechanism in order to spotlight imminent conflicts. That would not only render peacekeeping operations more effective but would also substantially reduce expenditure. Furthermore, each mission needed clear political leadership and a unified command and control structure, the effectiveness of which should be ensured by investing all levels of the mission command structure with specific functions and powers.

91. Turning to the functions and structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, he recalled that, in its resolution 51/239, the General Assembly had requested the Secretary-General to submit an in-depth evaluation and subsequent budgetary proposals that reflected the overall evolution of peacekeeping trends. He regretted that the Secretary-General's report submitted in compliance with that resolution (A/52/837), had not done justice to the hopes of Member States. Bangladesh requested the Secretary-General to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the activities of the Department in the light of the actual requirements of its field operations.

92. His delegation supported the establishment of a rapidly deployable mission headquarters at the earliest opportunity, which would significantly reduce the preparation time in deploying peacekeeping missions. In that connection, his delegation welcomed the adoption of General Assembly resolution 53/12 of 26 October 1998 authorizing the recruitment of two officers for the headquarters. It hoped that the Assembly would shortly be able to allow the Department to recruit the other six military personnel for the headquarters, and believed that the principle of geographical representation and participation by all Member States should be observed in their recruitment. His delegation was disappointed at the level of contributions to the trust fund for the headquarters. It took a positive view of the Secretary-General's proposal concerning the support account, which would, it believed, enable funds to be used flexibly to achieve the objectives set by Member States with regard to peacekeeping operations.

93. His delegation welcomed the adoption of the relevant General Assembly resolutions calling for the phasing out of all gratis personnel before the end of February 1999. In that connection, it again urged that recruitment to fill posts previously occupied by gratis personnel should be consistent with Articles 100 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations, that it should be transparent and that it should have as wide a geographical basis as possible. In that context, his delegation noted the initiatives taken by the Secretariat to recruit military and civilian personnel to fill the vacancies in question but shared the General Assembly's disappointment that the Secretariat had, for some unexplained reason, changed the deadline for the submission of applications, which had resulted in differential treatment among Member States.

94. The Secretariat's procedure for the procurement of goods and services for peacekeeping operations needed to

be enhanced in order to make it timely, efficient, cost-effective and transparent. When a contract was awarded, the principle of public bidding should be strictly observed, and the geographical base for procurement should be enlarged. A negligible proportion of the total volume of procurement was currently obtained from the troop-contributing developing countries. Consideration should therefore be given to according preferential treatment in that regard to the developing countries, especially the least developed countries and the African countries.

95. Civilian police played an increasingly important role in peacekeeping operations by providing assistance to local police forces in restoring and maintaining civil order and in fostering civil reconciliation. Care should be taken to ensure that police and military tasks were clearly differentiated. Broader geographical representation in civilian police posts at higher levels in field missions also needed to be ensured. In that connection, his delegation stressed the importance of developing at an early date principles governing the role of civilian police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations.

96. His delegation fully concurred with the view that the financing of peacekeeping operations was the collective responsibility of all Members of the United Nations and was therefore concerned at the reluctance of some countries to pay their assessed contributions to the peacekeeping budget. Non-payment of such contributions had restricted the Organization's ability to reimburse troop contributors, particularly those from the least developed countries like Bangladesh. It was therefore imperative that all Member States, especially the developed ones, should pay their contributions in full, on time and without conditions in accordance with the existing scales of assessment. His delegation believed that those scales could be made permanent without delay.

97. His delegation was seriously concerned at the delay in the settlement of compensation for death and disability. Now that a uniform rate for such compensation had been adopted, the Secretariat should develop procedures for the payment of dues in a speedy manner. His delegation also viewed with deep concern the continued delays in the reimbursement of troop costs and contingent equipment leases, which had caused hardship to all troop- and equipment-contributing countries, especially the developing and least developed countries.

98. There was no need to re-emphasize the importance of the proper training of troops and civilian police personnel involved in peacekeeping operations. Although the training of such personnel was essentially the responsibility of Member States, the United Nations also had an important role to play in training both military and civilian police personnel. In that connection, his delegation reiterated the offer of his Government to provide a venue in Bangladesh for the establishment of the South Asia peacekeeping training centre.

99. Bangladesh's firm commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and to United Nations peacekeeping activities was reflected in the number of personnel from that country, both military and civilian, who had served in peacekeeping missions around the world. Bangladesh had been, and hoped to remain, a major troop-contributing Member State. Lastly, he paid tribute to all United Nations peacekeepers who had laid down their lives for the cause and glory of peace.

100. **Mrs. Escobar** (Mexico) expressed appreciation for the report of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, which described not only the general principles of peacekeeping operations but also the main problems faced by Members of the United Nations in the deployment and use of such operations.

101. Peacekeeping operations were undoubtedly a useful tool for the United Nations but, her delegation believed, should not be undertaken lightly. Peacekeeping operations could help restore peace in times of conflict but they were no substitute for dialogue between the parties. They should therefore be undertaken not as a rule but rather as an exception to the rule.

102. In recent years the number of United Nations peacekeeping operations mounted to settle international — and sometimes internal — conflicts had grown significantly. Experience had shown, however, that the deployment of such operations was not always the best way to resolve a problem. In her delegation's view, it was more important to eradicate the causes of conflicts than to be constantly setting up new peacekeeping operations. The resolution of social and ethnic problems, along with the establishment of mechanisms to assist the social and economic development of peoples, was therefore of prime importance.

103. Her delegation recognized the importance of ensuring the effective functioning of peacekeeping operations. To that end it would be essential to take into account the new realities of international relations and formulate clear mandates for any such operations. In addition, an operation should take place at the request and with the agreement of the interested parties; otherwise the principles of non-interference and respect for State sovereignty would be violated and the operation would be bound to fail.

104. Her delegation was concerned at the continuing practice of setting up so-called "coalitions of interested parties", allegedly on the basis of Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. It reiterated its view that principles should not be sacrificed for the sake of greater efficiency, which was why such coalitions were formed. The drive for efficiency had often led to legal standards being watered down, with dangerous consequences for the legitimacy of the Organization's activities to maintain international peace and security.

105. With regard to participation in United Nations peacekeeping activities by regional bodies, her delegation reiterated its position that such participation should be based on the provisions of Chapter VIII of the Charter.

106. She noted with satisfaction that the Latin American region set a good example in that regard, with each Government endeavouring to avert wars and eliminate the causes of potential conflicts. The problem was by no means easy and the support of the United Nations was essential. Her delegation hoped that the Organization would redouble its efforts to eliminate such causes of conflict. She emphasized her delegation's readiness to continue its active participation in the work of the Special Committee in that regard.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.